

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Martha Fuller, Director



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Randy Kelly, Mayor

25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Telephone: 651-266-6565
Facsimile: 651-228-3261

ARCADE STREET - COMMERCIAL 40-ACRE STUDY

October 9, 2003

This report and recommended zoning changes are recommended to the Saint Paul Planning Commission. For more information, please contact Joel Spoonheim, Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development, at (651) 266-6614 or joel.spoonheim@ci.stpaul.mn.us

ARCADE STREET - COMMERCIAL 40-ACRE STUDY

City Council Request

City Council Ordinance 01-648, adopted on July 18, 2001, implemented a moratorium preserving the status quo with respect to the use of property in the area under study for the Arcade Street Small Area Plan. This ordinance was amended on numerous occasions and extended to have effect until December 27, 2003.

Authority for the Study

Amendments to the Zoning Code follow the procedures in Section 64.400 of the Code and Minnesota Statutes Section 462.357. Either the City Council or the Planning Commission can initiate amendments. Public hearings with required notice are held by both the Planning Commission and the City Council.

The Issue

The purpose of Arcade Street Commercial 40-Acre Study is to establish zoning classifications that support the redevelopment of the Arcade Street Corridor and surrounding residential neighborhood. The specific redevelopment goals were identified through the Arcade Street Small Area Plan process as outlined below.

Land uses along Arcade range from single family homes, the most restrictive use, to auto body shops, the least restrictive land use. The uses are intermixed in no consistent pattern, resulting in incompatibility among land uses.

Rezoning parcels to be consistent with the vision for the Arcade Street Corridor will foster appropriate development that strengthens the overall neighborhood.

This Arcade Street *Commercial* 40 Acre Study focuses only on the commercial properties along Arcade. A subsequent 40-Acre Study accompanied by the Small Area Plan will address changes in the residential areas surrounding the commercial district.

The Process and Community Goals

The Planning Commission established a task force with representatives from businesses and residents. The task force met beginning in 2001 through late 2002. PED staff also attended neighborhood meetings to discuss the key issues and goals.

Stated goals of the community include:

- 1.Enhance the appearance of buildings and the streetscape through the application of design standards
- 2.Identify sites for land assembly to redevelop both commercial and residential structures.
- 3.Improve the transportation infrastructure that will benefit both residents and business owners.
- 4.Develop a strategy for retaining and recruiting business and residential development.
- 5.Increase the availability of quality affordable housing and enhance the market for mixed income housing.

The following land use and zoning issues were identified.

1. Some automotive businesses are not compatible with the residential and small business character of the neighborhood. Specific examples include:
 - a. Parking of autos for sale on public streets in front of neighborhood residences
 - b. Car parts, tires and other metallic junk are stored outside the main building
 - c. Vehicles are being repaired outside of main building
 - d. Often there is not enough parking for vehicles awaiting repair
 - e. The smell of paint fumes is often a problem for residents
 - f. Unsightly chain link fences are built around auto type uses
1. Parking space is limited for many businesses for both employees and customers therefore parking extends into the neighborhood in front of residential properties near Arcade Street.
2. Some commercial properties are used for storage and are closed to the public, which is not the highest and best use of properties along Arcade Street.
3. There are several housing opportunity sites along Arcade Street, especially between the major commercial nodes.
4. There are too many bars along the street, which leads to increased nuisance activity, which is a disturbance to neighborhood residents.
5. Single family homes are the predominant housing type for the neighborhood and often abut commercial properties. This adjacent location is often a source of land use conflict between property owners.
6. Most businesses abut single family residential properties which limits their ability to expand/grow. As mentioned above, most businesses do not have enough parking and an expansion of building size may trigger increased requirements for parking.

Based on the land use and zoning issues identified above, changes in zoning along Arcade Street should be consistent with the following policy statements:

- 1) Reduce intensive uses such as automotive sales and repair.
- 2) Provide for in-fill housing development
- 3) Promote mixed use development

The Current Zoning Along Arcade

The entire stretch of Arcade Street from Nevada to the Arcade Street Bridge is currently zoned B-3, General Business District. In many cases lots that are occupied by single family homes are also zoned B-3. Seeger Square Shopping Center located at the south end of Arcade Street is zoned Planned Development (PD). This particular PD zoning district permits a certain percentage of property to be used for retail space; the remaining property is reserved for light manufacturing space. Much of the land along Maryland Avenue in the study area is also zoned B-3.

Zoning Code Amendments

The proposed zoning map (Appendix A) identifies changes in zoning that result from adoption of the zoning study recommendations.

In general, much of the property zoned B-3 will be changed to the mixed use classification of TN2 (TN stands for Traditional Neighborhood). TN2 is a new zoning district under final review for adoption by the Saint Paul City Council. If the TN2 classification is not in force at the time this proposed ordinance takes effect, the existing mixed-use zone (OS-2) shall be substituted only until such time that TN2 is in force. The conversion shall be automatic.

Consistency with Comprehensive Plan

The proposed zoning changes are consistent with the City of Saint Paul s Comprehensive Plan. The changes support the goals of providing housing on or near transit corridors. In addition and more specifically, Strategy 2 of the Land Use Plan, Neighborhoods as Urban Villages states:

Neighborhood commercial strips built during the streetcar era should be preserved and retain their pedestrian-oriented design. Commercial buildings should be located along the sidewalk. In these areas the Zoning Code should no longer allow parking lots in front of new buildings, except for gas stations.

The intent of this strategy is best met through the rezonings proposed.

Impact of Recommendations

The proposed changes will have little or no immediate impact on the vast majority of existing businesses and residents along Arcade. The impact will be noticed over time as certain uses previously allowed under the general commercial zoning (B-3) are no longer able to locate or grow along Arcade. The following business types if existing currently will be allowed to continue operations as legal non-conforming uses; however, no new businesses of these types will be allowed. The following is not an exhaustive list, but is merely illustrative of existing uses impacted by adopting TN2 zoning:

- ¥ Auto service station
- ¥ Auto repair
- ¥ Auto sales (indoor and outdoor)
- ¥ Auto body
- ¥ Car wash
- ¥ Pawn shops
- ¥ Currency exchange

Recommendation

City of Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development staff, based on the findings of the Arcade Small Area Plan Task Force, recommend amending the Zoning Code to reflect the changes identified in Appendix A.

Appendix A = Maps; Appendix B = List of impacted parcels